

I doubted whether our labor, employed in agriculture, and aided by the spontaneous energies of the earth would not procure us more than we could make ourselves of other necessities. But other considerations entering into the question have settled my doubts."

With the beginning of 1814, Jefferson first broached the subject which for many years had lain nearest his heart. To Dr. Thomas Cooper, then serving as Professor of Science in the University of South Carolina, he wrote: "I have long had under contemplation and been collecting materials for the plan of a university in Virginia which should comprehend all the sciences useful to us, and none others. The general idea is suggested in the Notes on Virginia (query 14). This would probably absorb the functions of William and Mary College and transfer them to a healthier and more central position, perhaps to the neighborhood of this place. The long and lingering decline of William and Mary, the death of its last President, its location and climate, force on us the wish for a new institution more convenient to our country generally, and better adapted to the present state of science. I have been told that there will be an effort in the present session of our legislature to effect such an establishment. I confess, however, that I have not great confidence this will be done." After the lapse of half a year he again wrote to Dr. Cooper, asking what branches of study might justly be regarded as most essential, and how the greatest number of studies could be assigned to each professor, consistently with the proper attention to each. Jefferson's interest had now a definite aim. The legislature had finally authorized the President and Directors of the Literary Fund to look into the establishment of a new educational institution, and Jefferson had been requested to prepare for this Board an address which should embody his best thought upon the matter. Simultaneously with this interest in the progress of his native State, the course of events drew his attention to national affairs. When the news reached Jefferson that the city of Washington had been burned by the British in August, it aroused in him an indignation which he had not felt since the British outrages